

From the President

The uneven ground of Austrian politics is tilled yet again

The uneven landscape of Austrian politics has been ploughed yet again, and the likely result is the same; an unevenness that is bound to lead to more political infertility and instability.

It was an election that Austria didn't need to have, but the consensus was that the country's political landscape was bogged down in indecision and deadlock. And so something had to be done.

It always struck me that the 'grand coalition' of the SPÖ and ÖVP could never work effectively. Imagine the Australian Labor Party and the Liberal Party trying to run Australia in coalition! The mind boggles.

But what now? The electorate has rejected the coalition and punished those who made a mess of it. And at the same time the electorate has reverted to nationalistic fears, or even regrets, of the past and injected new blood into the far Right in the FPÖ and the BZÖ. As the online news service Austrian Times said at the weekend: *Once again, the spectre looms of the tiny Alpine nation risking the world's wrath with an administration that includes people who admire the Nazis and some of their policies.*

Does this mean that the *Auslaender* faces an even more troubling future than before the election. Statistik Austria recently reported that some 588,000 of the 1.65 million people living in the city, which is 35 per cent, have a foreign background (defined as anyone born abroad or in Austria to parents born abroad).

It will be some time before we know the outcome of Sunday's election and what political persuasion the new government will thrust on Austrians, and indeed upon Europeans. In the meantime, as an outsider I am not going to give a personal opinion because it might get me in trouble. But I do look forward to the debates which will unfold in coming months. I just wish that my German was better than it is so I could read these debates in the local media.

Future course for OzCon

So let me turn to safer ground, good old OzCon. I want to foreshadow that changes are likely on this front too.

Participation by members in events has been lagging and this has left your Board wondering what should be done. The last two bar nights have seen dismal turn-outs. There were just five of us last Friday (26th), all of us regulars. Where are the new faces, I ask? The BBQ was also down on numbers although the poor weather no doubt played its part.

There have been appeals for ideas on what members would like to do. However, the result has mostly been silence. I have appealed more than once for greater contribution to the newsletter. My latest appeal resulted in three responses suggesting possible articles. However, for various reasons, nothing eventuated in time for this newsletter.

And so we have opted to drop the bar night for October and have a heurigen evening instead. Details are on page five. A booking has been made, but we will need to know how many will attend.

Your Board will meet this month to discuss OzCon's future course. We will consider whether to alternate monthly bar nights with a dinner at a family restaurant, or a gathering at a wine bar or a weekend brunch. Should the bar night be on another day of the week? Should we alternate the venue? Or do we just stick to say the five main events of the year – Australia Day, ANZAC Day, the summer BBQ, participation in the UNWG Christmas Bazaar and our Christmas dinner, with the occasional special event? And do we produce the newsletter every second month or quarterly and communicate in between with members via email?

All these options will be discussed and you are welcome to express a point of view. You can write to the OzCon address at ozcon_board@yahoo.com.au or to any Board member.

**It's Pavlova Time....
THAT bazaar is coming again
So it's time to raise the hands**

The UN Women's Guild international bazaar will be held in the Austria Centre on Saturday 6 December 2008. While this remains some way off, OzCon needs to start putting things in place to make our contribution to world children's charities successful yet again.

Once again we are asking you to think about how you can contribute. If you can provide pavlovas and/or lamingtons please do let us know, and also how many you plan to whip up. In addition we need to start gathering the names of helpers who can set up the stall on the Friday evening, be on a roster for serving on the day, prepare food, take on cashier duties, be in charge of selling our wine and/or stay back to dismantle the decorations in the evening. Last year we had many volunteers and they are very welcome again this year.

Jenny Hanna is the coordinator this year and will record the names and keep a tally of the pavlovas and lamingtons. You can drop her a line by e-mail at jenny.hanna@dfat.gov.au or phone her on 01-50674-160.

The pavlovas need to be concave on the top so that the fresh cream and fruit can be added at the stall. Experience has been that it is easier to sell the small to medium size pavlovas more than the large ones which were sold by the slice.

Another big seller last year was Liz Crawford's lovely lamingtons. Liz has volunteered to make them again this year, but not as many, so if anyone can help with a few more please let Jenny know.

Details of how and when this all comes together will be in the November newsletter.



OzCon BBQ at the Alte Donau

After perfect weather in the lead up to the event, Sunday itself wasn't the best of weather. I and my family had a nervous start wondering if anyone was going to show but in true Aussie style, i.e. a little later than expected, those who had confirmed didn't let us down and we were a total of about six families. This time there was no swimming but rather keeping ourselves warm by the bbq. However the cricket sets did come out again and some of the kids had a game. It was a good chance for those who were there to catch up, meet a few new people and it was great for the kids.
- Amanda Grant



Eden Sarelius, Diana and Peter Boag, Michelle Kay



Isabella, Annika and Julia Altenburger (front) with Rachael and Lynda Sarelius



Kelly James and her two boys in foreground

Monaco? No, Opatija



In September I visited Opatija in Croatia for some R&R with my husband Wolfgang. He had told me about Opatija saying that back in the Empire days it was considered the Empire's Monaco. I can certainly understand why. It is a gorgeous small village on the Adriatic and features many old Empire buildings that have been lovingly restored. We had a great few days, ate like kings and queens, see I even think I'm part of the Empire! The seafood was divine and the Croatian food generally was delicious. We stayed at the Savoy Hotel, a lovely old building which was right on the water and magnificently restored. I would certainly recommend anyone heading that way to stay there. Email: info@hotel.savoy.hr and website: www.hotel-savoy.hr. Another big bonus was that it only took us 5 ½ hours to get there from Baden.



Hotel Savoy

- Liz Crawford

Don't let the truth get in the way of a good story



The headline on the front page of the Gold Coast Bulletin read: "Six reasons why Adelaide should stick to the arts." It then proceeded to pour scorn on poor little old Adelaide, even to the point of saying one of the reasons was "Alexander Downer lives there."

And why? Because there was a rumour that Adelaide wanted to bid for the 2018 Commonwealth Games. The problem was, the Gold Coast was also bidding to host the Games.

But it didn't stop there. Inside the paper was another heading: "Boring SA out of the running" and alongside the article was a table headed "reasons an Adelaide Games is a bad idea", for example "living in the 80s was great - when it actually was the 80s."

And below that a table headed "The good and the bad of Adelaide and South Australia". One example of good: "The drive out. It has some beautiful wineries in the Barossa Valley." And the bad, "Great white sharks. Too big, too hungry and too many around Adelaide."

As if that wasn't enough. The paper went even further. Its editorial attacked Adelaide for stealing the Gold Coast's pandas. [The Adelaide Zoo will get two pandas from China which the Gold Coast claims were supposed to go to a local zoo]. The editorial began: "Adelaide's puzzling penchant for trying to pinch Gold Coast initiatives is starting to wear a bit thin." Even the cartoon was anti-Adelaide.

And the truth? Adelaide had no intention of making a bid. A South Australian Minister even got in trouble for saying the Commonwealth Games were "a second rate event." And the pandas were never going to Queensland, according to my daughter Simone who is a keeper at Adelaide Zoo.

- Brett Bayly

Watching TV with a python and snoring dogs

Have you ever tried watching television with a 1.8m python wrapped around your neck? Believe me, it's an interesting experience.

Lucy is my daughter's docile olive python, the second largest species of python in Australia. She is a member of my daughter's family at her home in the Adelaide Hills where I recently spent a very pleasant two weeks.



Brett with Lucy

Simone, you see, is a zoo keeper at the Adelaide Zoo where she is in charge of the primates, the orangutans, apes and monkeys. But not content with handling animals during her working hours, Simone and her partner Will have a miniature zoo of their own at home.

Lucy, who will grow to more than 4 m, is occasionally taken from her big cabinet in the front lounge to 'mix it' with the family. Not so Greg the black-soiled pygmy dragon, a desert lizard who gives you the piercing eye from his cabinet in the TV room, or Jack the Southern-



Hi, I'm Greg

Angle headed dragon, a tropical lizard who likes to be sprayed with mist water at regular intervals but is difficult to find amid the foliage in his cabinet.

And in the kitchen are the five green tree frogs, with running water and all. When Simone and Will went to work and I got up and put the kettle on, I sometimes became aware of a strange noise which at first had me puzzled as to the source. The kettle would make a loud whistle and this would get one of the frogs all excited and he/she would start to croak in what seemed like a very high pitch.



Croaking to the kettle

But the family favourites are the dogs. Maddie, Quinton and Cooper are three gorgeous boxers who run the house, rip up the back yard and like to take you for a walk. They are Simone and Will's 'kids' who like to share the comfort and warmth of the tv room on a cold Adelaide Hills night. But the snoring can be annoying.

– Brett Bayly



Simone, partner Will with Quinton, Cooper and Maddie

OzCon Event

Watching whales can be exhilarating

Whale watching has become a multi-million industry in Australia, and it is no wonder. Watching these giants of the ocean can be exhilarating, especially when they come fully out of the water, called breaching.



A humpback breaches

Our family had two encounters with the whales during our recent holiday. The first was during a four day cruise on the Great Barrier Reef out of Cairns. A giant humpback frolicked beside our ship for about 30 minutes during which it breached several times.

The second encounter was off the tourist beaches of the Gold Coast where an estimated 7500 humpback whales pass between June and the end of October. During a four-hour cruise out of Southport we saw about 10 whales, including one with a calf which the ship's captain estimated was only a few weeks old.

Catching a whale on camera when it breaches can be a frustrating experience. They dive deep and you never know where they will come thundering out of the water. It takes only a few seconds before they crash back into the water and so many of my photographs were of big splashes.



These magnificent creatures frolic and play in the open waters off the Gold Coast for all to see and it is one of the rare points on the east coast of Australia where, from the middle of August, whale traffic heads in both directions.

The cruise cost \$196 (about €112) for two adults and two children and was well worth it. – Brett Bayly

We are planning a Heurigen evening on Saturday 18th October and would like to see as many members as possible come along and enjoy the evening together.

Heurigen: Zum Martin Sepp

Address: Cobenzigasse 34

1190 Wien

Phone: 01 320 3233

Website: www.zummartinsepp.at

You can reach the Heurigen via tram 38.

A booking has been made for 17.30 and we need to know numbers beforehand so please let Gabrielle know if you are planning to come gabrielle.costigan@gmx.at



Fishing in the Northern Territory can often be exciting. But, as this photo from the Northern Territory News shows, it's not so funny when the fisherman becomes the bait.

Just before the funeral service, the Funeral Director came up to the very elderly widow and asked, "How old was your husband?"

"98" she replied, "Two years older than me"

"So you're 96" the Funeral Director commented.

She responded, "Hardly worth going home, is it?"

Aussie News Briefs

29 Sept. - **AUSTRIA'S two ruling parties**, the Social Democrats and conservatives, received a severe drubbing in a snap general election here today, which was marked by a resurgence of the far-right. According to the official preliminary results, read out by Interior Minister Maria Fekter, the Social Democrat SPOe managed to hold on to first place, garnering 29.7 per cent of votes. But the reading represented a drop of 5.6 percentage points from the previous election in October 2006 and was the lowest score in SPOe history. The conservative OeVP's losses were even more dramatic, plummeting 8.7 percentage points to 25.6 per cent, also its lowest-ever score. Both parties lost votes to the far-right FPÖe and BZÖe parties, with the Freedom Party (FPÖe) under Heinz-Christian Strache seeing its vote-share surge by 7.1 per cent to 18.0 per cent while Joerg Haider's Alliance for Austria's Future (BZÖe) saw its score nearly treble to 11.0 per cent. (Australian)

27 Sept. - **IRON-WILLED Hawthorn** derailed the Geelong juggernaut to win their 10th AFL premiership today. The Cats came into the grand final having won 42 of their last 44 matches and chasing back-to-back flags for the first time in more than half a century. But it was the Hawks who flew highest, booting 13 goals to six after quarter-time to win 18.7 (115) to 11.23 (89) before an MCG crowd of 100,012, the biggest for a grand final since 1986. (Herald Sun)

24 Sept. - **TASMANIA** is bracing itself for a flu pandemic which mathematical modelling suggests could immobilise 25 per cent of the population, kill 350 and hospitalise 1700 patients. (Mercury)

21 Sept - **QANTAS** has only just welcomed its first Airbus A380 superjumbo to Australia and already it wants more. The airline is in talks with manufacturer Airbus about adding further A380s to existing order of 20 planes and hopes publicity surrounding today's arrival of the giant plane will help restore its battered reputation. (Australian)



First Qantas A380 arrives in Sydney



Self-serve snacks in Economy New Premium Economy

20 Sept. - **DROUGHT conditions have worsened in NSW**, with more than 70 per cent of the state now officially drought-declared. Figures released by the NSW Department of Primary Industries on Saturday show just 10.8 per cent of the state, mostly on the eastern coastline, has enjoyed normal rainfall, and was rated as "satisfactory" in September. Primary Industries Minister Ian Macdonald said the drought figure had increased from 66.2 per cent of the state in the previous month. (AAP)

20 Sept. - **INFANTS dosed with paracetamol** have up to three times the chance of getting asthma later in life, a major research study shows. The New Zealand study, which included Australian children, shows about one in five children in their first year are given paracetamol too often. It found this overdosing could triple a child's risk of developing asthma by the age of six or seven. (Advertiser)

17 Sept. - **WESTERN Australia's newly elected Labor leader**, Eric Ripper, has pledged his party will be ready to govern at any time, as the minority Liberal Government takes office with "only a tenuous hold on power". The former treasurer was elected unopposed yesterday morning at a sometimes emotional Labor caucus meeting, in which former premier Alan Carpenter told his colleagues he had done his best in the election campaign but could not seem to get the party's message across. (Australian)

16 Sept. - **COST-of-living pressure** is affecting more than 80 per cent of Australians, the latest Newspoll has found. And it may be turning us to drugs and drink. The pressure of feeding families and balancing budgets has overtaken the environment as a major concern preoccupying Australians. The environment was a major concern last year but now it's the top worry for just 4 per cent of people. (Herald Sun)

Aussie News Briefs cont'd

16 Sept. - **MALCOLM Turnbull** has used his first press conference as Liberal leader to accuse Kevin Rudd of policy recklessness and displaying a failure of economic leadership. Mr Turnbull also said that, while Opposition policies would be under review, he would keep Brendan Nelson's plan to cut petrol excise by five cents a litre, oppose the Government's Medicare changes and maintain the policy on an emissions trading scheme. He began the battle to claw back the Liberal's economic credentials by attacking Labor's claim to be fiscal kings. (Sydney Morning Herald)



Opposition Leader Malcolm Turnbull

12 Sept - **THE Rudd Government** has scrapped plans for a climate change summit with state premiers and chief ministers due in three weeks because of delays in getting the policy together and uncertainty over the West Australian election. Instead, the Government is scrambling to assemble an agenda for the Council of Australian Government meeting, which is scheduled to be held in Perth on October 2, with officials being asked to provide suggestions for "announceables". (Australian)

9 Sept - **AUSTRALIA'S government spending on public education** is the second lowest among developed nations, a new report has found. Turkey, Portugal, Mexico and Iceland all spend more money on public education institutions than Australia. Only Belgium spends less. Federal Education Minister Julia Gillard says the new OECD Education at a Glance report highlights the need for the Rudd Government's much-hyped "education revolution". (Advertiser)

5 Sept. - **THE federal government's top climate adviser** recommends Australia cut its emissions by 10 per cent by 2020, a target slammed by conservationists as "laughable". In a major report released on Friday, economist Ross Garnaut says Australia is a special case and should do less to reduce its emissions than every other developed country. The 2020 target is crucial for international negotiations over climate, and will set prices under emissions trading when it starts in 2010. (AAP)

A bit of fun

A magazine recently ran a 'Dilbert Quotes' contest. They were looking for people to submit quotes from their real-life Dilbert-type managers. These were voted the top ten quotes in corporate America:

'As of tomorrow, employees will only be able to access the building using individual security cards. Pictures will be taken next Wednesday, and employees will receive their cards in two weeks.'

(This was the winning quote from Fred Dales, Microsoft Corp. In RedmondWA)

'What I need is an exact list of specific unknown problems we might encounter.'
(Lykes Lines Shipping)

'E-mail is not to be used to pass on information or data. It should be used only for company business.'
(Accounting manager, Electric Boat Company)

'This project is so important we can't let things that are more important interfere with it.'
(Advertising/Marketing manager, United Parcel Service)

'Doing it right is no excuse for not meeting the schedule.'
(Plant Manager, Delco Corporation)

'No one will believe you solved this problem in one day! We've been working on it for months. Now go act busy for a few weeks and I'll let you know when it's time to tell them.'
(R&D supervisor, Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing/3M Corp.)

Quote from the Boss: 'Teamwork is a lot of people doing what I say.'
(Marketing executive, Citrix Corporation)

My sister passed away and her funeral was scheduled for Monday. When I told my Boss, he said she died on purpose so that I would have to miss work on the busiest day of the year. He then asked if we could change her burial to Friday. He said, 'That would be better for me.'
(Shipping executive, FTD Florists)

'We know that communication is a problem, but the company is not going to discuss it with the employees.'
(Switching supervisor, AT&T Long Lines Division)



Performances with Australian Artists

From the Australian Events Calendar as at 30 September 2008, Australian Embassy Vienna

<p>2 October 7:30 pm</p>	<p><i>Willoughby Choir in Concert</i></p>	<p>Marienkirche in Bad Schoenau Lower Austria For directions to Bad Schoenau please refer to www.badschoenau.at</p>	<p>Forty choristers from the Willoughby Choir from New South Wales will be performing. The choir will be singing a mix of Australian sacred and secular music, as well as a Schubert Mass.</p>
<p>2 October 8:30 pm</p>	<p><i>Public Reading – Les Murray</i></p>	<p>Alte Schmiede Schoenlaterngasse 9 1010 Vienna Ph: 01 512 444674 www.alte-schmiede.at www.lesmurray.org</p>	<p>Australian author Les Murray will be reading from his collection of poems “Translations from the Natural World”. The reading will be in English with translations by Margitt Leibert.</p>
<p>13 October 2:30 pm</p>	<p><i>Guest Lecture – Gail Jones</i></p>	<p>Universitäts Campus Lecture Hall – HS C2 Hof 2 Enter via Spilalgasse 2-4 Contact Prof Dr. Margarete Rubik Ph: 01 4277 42471 Email: margarete.rubik@univie.ac.at</p>	<p>Australian novelist and academic, Gail Jones will present “The Disease of Images: the politics of representation and indigeneity in Australia”.</p>
<p>17 – 19 October</p>	<p><i>Australian Design at “Blickfang” – Design Fair for Furniture, Fashion and Jewellery</i></p>	<p>MAK – Museum of Applied Arts/Contemporary Art Weiskirchnerstrasse 3 1010 Wien www.blickgang.com</p>	<p>Innovative design, unusual shapes and ideas. Young national and international designers from around the world will be presenting and selling their latest collections. In cooperation with Australian Icons, ten of Australia’s most exciting designers will be presenting their design at the Sydney Corner.</p>

Unless otherwise specified, all telephone numbers are in Vienna

Australian Connection (OZCON)

email: ozcon_board@yahoo.com

President: **Brett Bayly**

Tel: 06991 264 5813

Home: 264 5813

brett_bayly@yahoo.com.au

Vice President: **Gabrielle Costigan**

Phone: 0664 61 22522

gabrielle.costigan@gmx.at

Secretary: **Amanda Grant**

Phone: 2711027

amandagrants65@gmail.com

Treasurer and Membership Coordinator

Susanna Martin-Murtinger

Tel: H: 944 0353

paul.martin@chello.at

Newsletter Editor: **Liz Crawford**

Mobile: 0699 1268 1023

Home: 02252 252 638

Lizziecrawf@yahoo.co.uk

Bank Account Details:

Susanna Martin-Murtinger

OZCON Account

Raiffeisenlandesbank Niederösterreich – Wien
BLZ 32000

Kontonummer (Account Number): 12.097.176

Membership Fee: €20

Australian Embassy

Mattiellistrasse 2-4, 1040 Vienna

Tel: 506740

www.australian-embassy.at

Useful Websites:

www.ethermagazine.at

www.nucolorvue.com.au

www.australien-lifestyle.de

www.virtualvienna.net

www.australian-embassy.at

www.ninemsn.com.au

www.kids-days.com/Wien/index_wien.html

www.expatsconsulting.com

www.homesick.com.au

www.viennababiesclub.com

http://www.abc.net.au/vod/news/

www.australianaonline.com.au

www.news.com.au

www.expatriates.com

www.australia.gov.au

Other Associations

Austrian-Australian Society (OAG)

Hubert Heine, General Secretary

Tel: 0676 5003058; 9847328

Heine69at@yahoo.de

www.australia-austria.at

American Women's Association (AWA)

Tel: 9662925

awa@awavienna.com

www.awavienna.com

Women's Career Network (WCN)

Tel: 9662925

wcnvienna@yahoo.com

www.wcnvienna.com

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